

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

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| TO: | Mayor and Councilors |
| AGENDA SUBJECT: | FY25 Public Defender Contract |
| AGENDA SUMMARY: | Approval is requested to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,742,257 from July 2024 to June 2025 and authorize payment to Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for \$1,917,889 and for \$95,894, 5% administrative fee (GPDSC payment is included in the total amount of \$2,742,257); authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to have signature authority. |
| INITIATED BY: | Finance Department |

Recommendation: Approval is requested to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,742,257 from July 2024 to June 2025 and authorize payment to Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for \$1,917,889 and for \$95,894, 5% administrative fee (GPDSC payment is included in the total amount of \$2,742,257); authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to have signature authority.

Background: The Circuit Public Defender will provide public defender personnel in Superior, Juvenile, and Recorder’s Courts totaling \$2,742,257 of which \$1,917,889 and an administrative fee of \$95,894 is paid in monthly installments to the GPDSC for a total of \$2,013,784. These services include payroll, fringe benefits, training, travel, computer hardware, computer software and legal research software. Support staff and operational expenses are funded in the FY25 budget for a total of \$728,473. Included in this FY25 contract is a continuation of funding for two Assistant Public Defenders funded from the General Fund for the Rapid Resolution Initiative that began in FY16. This contract also includes funding for three (3) Assistant Public Defenders that were added in FY17 (2 APD’s) and FY19 (1 APD) as well as supplements for the Chief Public Defender (\$20,000) and Assistant Chief Public Defender (\$15,000) due to providing representation in Recorder’s Court. New to the FY25 budget is a pay increase for attorneys paid under this contract (excluding the Chief Public Defender and Assistant Chief Public Defender). In the contract, the prorated share of all costs are outlined as follows: Muscogee - \$2,582,770; Chattahoochee - \$5,125; Harris - \$114,000; Marion - \$12,193; Talbot - \$12,220; Taylor - \$15,949 for a total of \$2,742,257. Muscogee County acts as the fiscal agent for the Circuit Public Defender.

Analysis: The Circuit Public Defender, City Attorney’s Office and the Finance Department have reviewed this contract.

Financial Considerations: The agreement is budgeted in the FY25 Adopted Budget.

Legal Considerations: The Columbus Consolidated Government is eligible to enter into this contract.

Recommendations/Actions: Approval is requested to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,742,257 from July 2024 to June 2025 and authorize payment to Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for \$1,917,889 and for \$95,894, 5% administrative fee (GPDSC payment is included in the total amount of \$2,742,257); authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to have signature authority.

A RESOLUTION

NO.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES BETWEEN CIRCUIT PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT AND MUSCOGEE COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,742,257 FROM JULY 2024 TO JUNE 2025 AND AUTHORIZE PAYMENT TO THE GEORGIA PUBLIC DEFENDER STANDARDS COUNCIL (GPDSC) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,013,784 PAID IN MONTHLY INSTALLMENTS OF \$167,815.31 OF WHICH IS INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT;

WHEREAS, the Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit was created in January 2005 by the Georgia Indigent Defense Act of 2003 and provides that a consolidated government may contract with the circuit public defender for the provision of criminal defense for indigent persons in Superior and Juvenile courts; and,

WHEREAS, the contract specifies the amount of \$2,103,784 for state paid personnel and administrative fee for the period of July 2024 to June 2025 and Columbus Consolidated Government personnel and operating expenses of \$728,473 with Muscogee County’s prorated share of all expenses to be \$2,582,770.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

That the Mayor and the City Manager are hereby authorized to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,582,770 from July 2024 to June 2025 and authorize payment to the GPDSC in the amount of \$1,9176,889 plus the administrative fee of \$95,894 to be paid in monthly installments of \$167,815.31 which is included in the total amount; and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to have signature authority.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the ____ day of ____, 2024 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of ____ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____.
- Councilor Chambers voting _____.
- Councilor Cogle voting _____.
- Councilor Crabb voting _____.
- Councilor Davis voting _____.
- Councilor Garrett voting _____.
- Councilor Hickey voting _____.
- Councilor Huff voting _____.
- Councilor Thomas voting _____.
- Councilor Tucker voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor